

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A flexible pouch comprising:
 - two side walls (100, 101) rendered integral by at least a sealing line (9); and
 - a line of preferential tearing (5) provided in one of the two side walls,
 - in which the line of preferential tearing (5) extends along the sealing line (9), the distance (a) between the line of preferential tearing (5) and the sealing line (9) being less than or equal to 10 mm.
 2. The pouch according to Claim 1, wherein the distance (a) between the line of preferential tearing (5) and the sealing line (9) is less than or equal to 8 mm, preferably to 6 mm, more advantageously to 4 mm, even more advantageously to 2 mm, even to 1 mm.
 3. The pouch according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein the line of preferential tearing (5) extends facing at least one edge of the pouch.
 4. The pouch according to Claim 3, wherein the distance (d) between the line of preferential tearing (5) and a pouch edge nearest the line of preferential tearing is greater than 9 mm.
 5. The pouch according to Claim 3 or 4, wherein the pouch edge facing the line of preferential tearing and which is the closest to the line of preferential tearing is the upper edge of the pouch.
 6. The pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 5, wherein the sealing line (9) is provided along the upper edges (1) of the side walls.

7. The pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 6, wherein the line of preferential tearing (5) extends from an edge of the pouch.
8. The pouch according to Claim 7, wherein the edges (2; 3) of the walls corresponding to the said edge of the pouch from which the lines of preferential tearing extend are sealed together and a notch (7; 8) is made in the sealing zone of the said edges of the walls at the line of preferential tearing.
9. The pouch according to Claim 7, wherein the side edges (2; 3) of the walls corresponding to the said edge of the pouch from which the line of preferential tearing extends are sealed together and a notch (7; 8) is made in the sealing zone of the said edges of the walls at a level intermediate between the line of preferential tearing (5) and the sealing line (9), preferably half way between the line of preferential tearing and the sealing line.
10. The pouch according to Claim 9, wherein the distance (e) between the edge of the sealing line (9) towards the line of preferential tearing (5) and the edge of the pouch facing which the line of preferential tearing (5) extends and which is the closest to the line of preferential tearing (5), is greater than 9 mm.
11. The pouch according to any one of Claims 7 to 10, wherein the said pouch edge from which the line of preferential tearing extends is a side edge (2) of the pouch.
12. The pouch according to any one of Claims 7 to 11, wherein the line of preferential tearing extends to a second edge of the pouch.
13. The pouch according to Claim 7, wherein the edges of the walls corresponding to the second edge of the pouch are sealed together.
14. The pouch according to Claim 12 or 13, wherein the second edge of the pouch to which the line of preferential tearing (5) extends is a second side edge (3) of the pouch.

15. The pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 14, comprising another line of preferential tearing provided in the other of the two side walls, this other line of preferential tearing lying opposite the line of preferential tearing provided in the first of the two side walls.
16. The pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 15, wherein it comprises a second line of preferential tearing (6) provided in the side wall in which the first line of preferential tearing (5) is provided, the second line of preferential tearing (6) extending parallel to the first line of preferential tearing (5), the distance (c) between the two lines of preferential tearing (5; 6) being less than or equal to 8 mm.
17. The pouch according to Claim 16, wherein two other parallel lines of preferential tearing are provided in the other of the two side walls, the two other lines of preferential tearing extending opposite the two lines of preferential tearing provided in the first of the two side walls.
18. The pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 17, wherein each side wall is made from a film comprising a light-metal layer held between two plastic layers.
19. The pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 18, wherein the width (b) of the sealing line (9) is greater than 9 mm.
20. The pouch according to any one of claims 1 to 18, comprising several sealing lines (9) forming a multi-line sealing strip, the width of this strip being greater than 9 mm.
21. The pouch according to any one of claims 1 to 20, wherein the or each sealing line (9) is either heat welded, or produced by ultrasound welding.
22. The pouch according to any one of claims 1 to 21, which is sealed against gas.

23. The pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 22, wherein each side wall in which is provided a line of preferential tearing (5) is made from a film comprising at least one plastic layer.
24. The pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 23, which is of the type intended to undergo heat treatment for preservation treatment.
25. The pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 24, the line(s) of preferential tearing being arranged for providing access to a content packaged in the pouch upon tearing the pouch along the line(s) of preferential tearing.
26. The use of a pouch according to any one of Claims 1 to 25 for packaging foodstuffs.
27. The use according to Claim 26, wherein the foodstuffs are of the moist type.
28. The use according to Claim 26 or 27, wherein the foodstuffs are of the loose-product type.